

EDITORIALS

LOS ANGELES AND SMALLPOX

In our July issue we said:

"The Public School Protective League"—This is from the letterhead of an organization that solicits funds for the purpose of opposing vaccination and other scientific medical policies. They designate vaccination in Los Angeles as 'A Modern Inquisition.'"

Under date of June 29 we have a protest reading in part:

"The Public School Protective League does not solicit funds for the purpose of opposing vaccination or any other scientific medical policy. It functions for the purpose of protecting public schools of the state against the encroachment of enforced physical examinations and vaccination. Its work is to advise parents concerning the laws of the state pertaining to such matters. The League has

no quarrel with any individual or organization desiring vaccination, neither does it attempt at any time to interfere with the physical examination of school children whose parents desire them to have such supervision at public expense.

"The Public School Protective League has at no time designated vaccination in Los Angeles 'A Modern Inquisition.' It did reprint and send out to its membership an article which appeared in The Christian Science Monitor and which was entitled 'A Modern Inquisition.' A copy of this article is enclosed herewith. You will note that the article had to do with the 'Inquisition' methods used by the Health Board in the city of Milwaukee during a so-called epidemic, coercing the public into submitting to vaccination."

The copy of leaflet enclosed follows. It needs no comment:

REYNOLD E. BLIGHT, Los Angeles
President

DR. HARRY W. FORBES, Los Angeles
Vice-President

MRS. CHAS. H. GODFREY, San Francisco
Vice-President

EDMUND J. CALLAWAY, Long Beach
Director

MISS MARY S. WILLIAMS, Pasadena
Director

DOUGLAS L. EDMONDS
MARSHALL STIMSON

General Counsel

DR. MAE PARSONS, Los Angeles
Director

MISS RUTH STERRY, Los Angeles
Director

MRS. HELEN L. PALMER, Los Angeles
Secretary-Treasurer

MRS. L. P. BOYCE, San Francisco
Secretary-Treasurer
for Northern California

The Public School Protective League

AN ORGANIZATION HAVING FOR ITS PURPOSE THE PROTECTION OF THE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM MEDICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL EXPLOITATION

The Function of the Public School
Is to Educate—Not to Medicate

714 UNION BANK BUILDING
325 W. Eighth Street
Telephone VAndike 9727

It is the School that is
Public—Not the Child

A Modern Inquisition

There is a striking similarity between the mode of procedure in the present smallpox situation in Los Angeles and that pursued in Wisconsin during a smallpox experience in that state.

The international newspaper, The Christian Science Monitor, under date of February 18, 1926, published a very strong editorial based on the Milwaukee affair, which the League feels is of special value at this time as bearing on the California problem. The Monitor article is here reprinted in full:

A MODERN INQUISITION

Frankness is to be commended as a general thing, but there are not many health officers who dare to be as frank regarding their use of 'fright and pressure' as agencies for promoting the use of their wares as was Dr. John P. Koehler, Commissioner of Health, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in an article in the Wisconsin Medical Journal for November, 1925. The article was a discussion of the alleged smallpox epidemic in Milwaukee, and started with the premise that the biggest job of a health department has always been, and always will be, to 'persuade' the 'unprotected' people to be vaccinated—a premise which he explained, or rather, amplified, by stating, 'This we attempted to do in three ways: first, by education; second, by fright; and third, by pressure.'

In expanding his subject, moreover, Doctor Koeh-

ler can never be accused of beating around the bush. 'During the months of March and April we tried education,' he wrote, 'and vaccinated only 62,000. During May we made use of fright and pressure, and vaccinated 223,000 people.' But he was still not content, apparently, with the result, for he unhesitatingly declares that there were still too many who could neither be educated nor frightened into vaccination. Hence he felt 'justified in using all of the power a health officer has, and if that was not enough, to get more.' And working from this standpoint, he quite naturally reasoned that, if fear will not accomplish so desirable an achievement as wholesale vaccination, why, then, put on the rack the people who dare to assert their right to individual determination in the matter of their own health measures, and stop their nonsensical opposition. For that is what the means next employed virtually amounted to.

Listen. 'We sent out a third letter to all employers requesting them to have all of their employees vaccinated and at the same time informing them that if a smallpox case developed in their place of employment in the future we would consider their place of business a menace to the health of the community and very likely place the entire establishment under quarantine until it could be cleaned up and made safe for the public. The results of the means employed were stated succinctly,

and doubtless with complete satisfaction to the health commissioner, in these two sentences:

'Putting the responsibility on the employer drove in thousands of antivaccinationists who could better afford to get vaccinated than lose their jobs. All employers cooperated very bravely with this last request, although in a few instances it was necessary to lay off old, reliable, and valuable employees.'

The tragedy of this situation is the more palpable when it is remembered that, even according to recent medical teachings, the effect of fright and such 'pressure' as above described is to produce a mental state by no means highly resistant of such conditions as the health officer was presumably working to overcome. Hence statistics as to the alleged results of his endeavors carry not the least real weight, because any improvement noted must have come about not because of, but despite, the measures employed. And when the significance of the fact is appreciated that without doubt the utilization of means such as those to which Doctor Koehler resorted was actually responsible for a great amount of sickness which followed them and which it was attempted so vigorously to combat, it is seen that the whole issue is one of far more vital importance than might appear on the surface.

It is needless, therefore, to point a moral in so obvious a case of extortion by terrorism. The people of the United States have a right to freedom of choice in healing as in religion. Hence those who attempt to usurp power to force an issue in the opposite direction are running counter to the stream of present-day progress, with consequences which need only be awaited for a short time to become manifest to public view.

(Reprinted from The Christian Science Monitor, February 18, 1926.)

We are glad to give publicity to the statement of the "League" that it *"does not solicit funds for the purpose of opposing vaccination or any other scientific medical policy,"* and we are pleased to have the assurance that *"the Public School Protective League has at no time designated vaccination in Los Angeles 'A Modern Inquisition.'"* They only reproduced and circulated under their own letterhead an article from The Christian Science Monitor.

Also we are glad to quote the League's statement that *"we must emphasize that at no time has the League fostered any movement to prevent the vaccination of anyone who really believed that it would be a protection against smallpox."*

A great many doctors agree with the implication that free adults who are opposed to the certain protection that successful vaccination affords, should be allowed to have their smallpox if they want it. Few, however, are willing to extend such "self-determination" to children, "shut-ins" and other incapables, nor are they willing to see people commit suicide by such a filthy method without making every possible effort to make the facts available to them. Of course the public health authorities have precisely as much authority in the control of smallpox as they have over other contagious and infectious diseases and that authority is still ample in California.

RIGHT OF CHOICE ON VACCINATION SHOWN BY JUDGE

D. L. Edmonds Answers Stand Taken by University of California President

Under these headlines The Christian Science Monitor, April 27, 1926, says:

Declaring in substance that vaccination has been foisted

upon the public through false representation and because of the financial gain which it brings medical practitioners, Judge Douglas L. Edmonds of the Los Angeles Municipal Court has stated the position of the Public School Protective League and other organizations and individuals who are opposing vaccination in California.

Judge Edmonds' statement in opposition to present methods of promoting wholesale vaccination in southern California is in response to a letter from Dr. W. W. Campbell, president of the University of California, in which Doctor Campbell expresses the hope that the Public School Protective League will not attempt to obstruct the campaign for vaccination, claiming that the efficacy of the practice has been amply shown.

After making it plain that opponents of vaccination oppose not the practice but the fact that health authorities are attempting to make it a compulsory measure, Judge Edmonds' letter declares:

'I fail to see the reason why the advocates of vaccination should so continually and persistently demand compulsion on its behalf. If vaccination protects, as those who believe in it claim, there is no possible reason why they should endeavor to compel others to submit to it. Certainly not for their own protection, because if they are vaccinated, they are protected.'

EXAGGERATION ALLEGED

I know that the reports of the health department show a large number of cases of smallpox in Los Angeles for the past few months. I know also, and I say this advisedly and dispassionately, that only a very few of these cases are actually smallpox. I believe that publicity was given to this alleged epidemic for the particular purpose of driving a large number of citizens to seek vaccination through compulsion, direct or indirect. I know that vaccination is today a huge commercial proposition and is manipulated as such.

If you do not believe these statements, let me say to you that I have not talked to a single physician, either health officer or private practitioner, who has not admitted to me as man to man that the Los Angeles situation has been grossly exaggerated. Each one of these persons tells me that the great majority of reported cases of smallpox are not smallpox at all and that health authorities have demanded that the medical profession include as smallpox every case even remotely having its symptoms.

If you say that this is impossible, let me remind you that at the time of the influenza situation a few years ago, health authorities demanded the reporting as influenza of even slight colds and that the then State Board of Health acknowledged the figures as grossly exaggerated.

I do not charge that every medical man or advocate of vaccination is deliberately promoting vaccination to his commercial advantage. But I do charge that the profits from the sale of vaccine and its administration are enormous, and that a small coterie of political doctors are manipulating the market for their wares.

MONETARY RETURN LARGE

When one physician in Los Angeles tells me that he made \$4000 from vaccination in February and the city and county had each bought thousands upon thousands of dollars' worth of vaccine, it is not difficult to see that the advocacy of vaccination may not be as disinterested as many suppose.

In conclusion may I say that I do not see why the smallpox situation should give you the official concern you mention? It would seem to me that your entire official responsibility ends when you make it possible for those who desire vaccination to receive it. When you compel vaccination you seriously encroach upon the rights of every citizen by setting up your own estimate of proper medical treatment as one which the individual must follow irrespective of his idea on the subject.

Let me cite one result of this: The beautiful, attractive daughter of Los Angeles parents of prominence was refused admission to your southern branch without vaccination. She and her parents finally, after much parleying with your officers here, consented to it with much reluctance. Within a week this lovely girl was dead.